

AN UPDATE FROM DR. CAROLINE LEAF

SLEEP, DIGESTION AND DREAMS

In my new book 'Think and Eat Yourself Smart' in the BEAT IT section, I give you practical tips, both physical and mental, to help start your journey to health - body, soul and spirit. Here is Tip no#11

TIP 11: SLEEP AND DIGESTION

The brain and the gut are connected in many things, including sleep. Healthy sleeping patterns contribute to healthy eating patterns.

1. Do not go to sleep worrying about your circumstance, this can upset your sleep cycles, your digestion and weight. Hand all your issues over to God—even if unsolved—and fall asleep quoting a scripture or thinking of all the good things that have happened to you, or any thing that makes you happy and feel at peace. Write your cares down before you sleep, and read the promises in God's word. A good scripture to memorize is 1 Peter 5:7: "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." Give him your fears.

2. Everyone has their own sleep cycle, a cycle that is as unique as everything else about them. We have to sleep, that is a no brainier, but there is no agreement on exactly how much sleep or when we should sleep among the scientists. You will do more damage to your health worrying about your sleep, wondering what will happen and then panicking that that you are not getting exactly eight hours of sleep and are not going to digest your food properly and get you sick and fat and have brain damage. These fears will cause more brain damage and worsen your sleep pattern, just relax, read the Bible and pray if you cannot sleep. Even start a discussion with the Holy Spirit about whatever you want to talk about.

3. Give your eating habits over to God each night before you sleep. Ask him to guide your food decisions.

4. Pray over your brain and your body before you go to sleep.

5. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you with your schedule. You are designed to "do busy well," but only if this "busy" is led by God. Not doing busy well will affect your sleeping patterns and your food choices, including how much you eat, since a lack of sleep is associated with a greater intake of food the next day. Healthy, peaceful sleeping patterns means you will eat well, and this will help maintain good health.

Want to develop some disciplined sleeping habits, get the Think and Eat Yourself Smart [ONLINE PROGRAM/APP](#) or get the [Book](#), or save \$10 and get the [COMBO](#)

DREAMS

We know that God has designed our brains and bodies to our advantage. Well, sleep – including little naps during the day when you are tired – is one of our greatest advantages. It has a multiplicity of benefits: our brains and bodies restore; our systems reboot; our processing and creativity ability increases; our chances of making bad decisions decrease; we can even find solutions to new problems whilst our memories and intelligence improve! And these are just a few of the benefits!

The research I have done over the years has shown that sleep plays a crucial role in memory development. In fact, new research from the University of Notre Dame shows that going to sleep shortly after learning new material is extremely beneficial for memory and sorting through problems. In fact the researchers advise that it

would be a good thing to rehearse any information you need to remember just before going to bed—your mind is then able to tell your sleeping brain what to consolidate.

Unfortunately, the converse is also true. If you rehearse problems as negative before you go to sleep, this will affect your rest and you will lose out on all these amazing benefits. It is thus really important as you go to sleep to “bring all thoughts into captivity to Christ Jesus” (2 Corinthians 10:5-7) so the Holy Spirit can work in your mind to produce wisdom and peace, and give you answers and solutions! We have to do our part by inviting the Holy Spirit to do His part.

Indeed science, as always, is catching up with the Bible when it comes to sleep! Many times God put His people to sleep in the Bible, and when they woke up great things had happened in their lives. Adam especially gained a major benefit from sleep...when he woke up he was minus one rib but plus one woman! Based on my research over the years I developed an applied neuroscientific process for learning called the “Switch on your brain with the 5-Step Learning Process® process” (see [INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT](#) for more information or you can order the [DVD/Workbook series](#)). Part of my 5-step Switch on your brain® process is cycling through the sequence of memory building (staggering learning episodes across time). An integral component of this part is going through the work for an exam, test or presentation just before you go to sleep. This leads to a greater degree of recollection, deeper understanding and the integration and more effective application of knowledge – up to 35-75% improvement!. Bottom line is that God has designed our brain’s to learn while we sleep.

Sleep is also important for regulating emotional responses. My research over the years has also shown a strong link between learning, emotion and sleep. Moreover, recent studies done at Harvard show that the sleeping brain seems to calculate what is most important about an experience and selects what is best for storage. If toxic emotions, such as worry and stress, are dominant when going to sleep, they will be selected and built as a dominant memory. So whatever we think about the most just before sleep becomes “tagged” and “flagged” as priority for consolidation in our brains, impacting the next day.

How you wake up in the morning is thus very much determined by how you go to sleep the night before. Therefore, the success of your day is influenced by your sleep patterns. Many people tell me they battle to sleep. The ability of our mind to think is fashioned after God’s own image, and hence is exponentially powerful. Put your mind into God’s control at night when you go to sleep and watch the difference the next day. Never forget, whatever we think about the most grows!

For more information on dreaming see [TO DREAM - OR NOT TO DREAM?](#) Watch a short video clip on [TOXIC DREAMS](#) (1.33m)

Dr Caroline Leaf shows you how to overcome toxic dreams in the [WHO SWITCHED OFF MY BRAIN revised Hardcover edition](#).

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